

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7232

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 8000

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KS

SUBJECT: ROKG CONCERNED BY AMERICAN MISSIONARY GEORGE OGLE'S
ACTIVITIES

1. ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER LHO CALLED IN AMBASSADOR DEC. 2 TO
DISCUSS "PROBLEMS" WHICH AMERICAN METHODIST MISSIONARY GEORGE
OGLE WAS CREATING FOR ROKG.

2. OGLE, ACCORDING TO LHO, MADE STRONG ANTI-GOVT SPEECH NOV. 14
IN WHICH HE CRITICIZED PRIME MINISTER AND ALSO DISCUSSED ROK CIA
IN DEROGATORY TERMS. AGAIN ON NOV 18 AND 28 OGLE HAD PUBLICLY
MADE REMARKS CRITICAL OF GOVERNMENT, AND NOV 24 OGLE CRITICIZED
ROKG OVER DONGA ILBO RADIO. OGLE, SAID LHO, WAS STEPPING UP
HIS ANTI-GOVT CAMPAIGN AND WAS INCREASINGLY INVOLVING HIMSELF IN
POLITICAL ACTIVITIES INSTEAD OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE AND RELIGIOUS
ACTIVITIES WHICH HE HAD BEEN GIVEN KOREAN VISA TO CARRY ON. LHO
THEN SAID AND LATER REPEATED THAT GOVT WAS, "REALLY EMBARRASED",
BY THESE ACTIVITIES AND ASKED WHAT AMBASSADOR COULD ADVISE IN
THIS SITUATION.

3. AMBASSADOR RESPONDED THAT IT WOULD BE MOST UNFORTUNATE FOR
AMERICAN MISSIONARY TO BE DEPORTED, PARTICULARLY JUST AFTER
PRESIDENT FORD'S VISIT; IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT IF POSSIBLE ROKG NOT
DO ANYTHING REGARDING OGLE TO DESTROY CURRENT GOOD ATMOSPHERE.
HE THEN ASKED LHO FOR PIECE OF PAPER OUTLINING THOSE
ACTIVITIES OF OGLE WHICH HAVE GIVEN RISE TO GOVT CONCERN. WITH THIS
AS BASIS, AMBASSADOR SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO SITUATION TO SEE
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PAGE 02 SEOUL 08000 020833Z

IF THERE WAS ANYTHING HE COULD DO. AMBASSADOR MADE CLEAR THAT HE

DID NOT KNOW WHETHER OGLE COULD BE PERSUADED TO RESTRAIN HIMSELF; BUT HE OR IN AMBASSADOR'S ABSENCE (AT EA CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE) DCM WOULD REPORT RESULTS OF OUR EFFORTS. IN MEANTIME AMBASSADOR REQUESTED THAT GOVT NOT TAKE ANY ACTION.

4. LHO AGREED TO THIS, SAYING THAT HE WOULD UNDERTAKE TO GET PAPER DESCRIBING OGLE ACTIVITIES ON FYI BASIS AND THAT HE WOULD URGE HIS SUPERIORS TO WITHHOLD IMMEDIATE ACTION.

5. IN COURSE CONVERSATION LHO ALSO MENTIONED HAVING HEARD OF ANTI-GOVT ACTIVITIES OF CATHOLIC MARYKNOLL MISSIONARY JAMES SINNOTT WHO WAS INVOLVED IN DEMONSTRATION IN FRONT OF EMBASSY NOV 21 (SEOUL 7781). AMBASSADOR SAID THAT IN THIS CASE HE KNEW THAT MARYKNOLLERS WERE THEMSELVES CONCERNED ABOUT FATHER SINNOTT'S ACTIVITIES AND WERE TRYING HARD TO RESTRAIN HIM.

6. COMMENT: OGLE HAS BEEN AMONG MOST OUTSPOKEN AMERICAN MISSIONARIES. AS REPORTED SEOUL 6798 AND EARLIER TELS HE WAS PICKED UP BY ROK/CIA FOR QUESTIONING IN OCTOBER, AND RELEASED AFTER EMBASSY MADE SEVERAL CALLS ON HIS BEHALF, HE TOLD US AT THAT TIME HE PLANNED TO BE PRUDENT AND HAD NO INTENTION OF PROVOKING ROKG INTO DEPORTING HIM. NEVERTHELESS OGLE SEEMS BENT DELIBERATELY ON A COURSE WHICH WILL LEAD TO HIS EXPULSION.

7. AFTER RECEIVING PROMISED PAPER FROM LHO WE PLAN TO TALK TO OGLE ONCE AGAIN TO DISCUSS ROKG'S GROWING CONCERN OVER HIS ACTIVITIES. WE WILL ALSO MAKE CLEAR TO OGLE WHAT HE CAN EXPECT IF HE CONTINUES ON PRESENT COURSE.
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